

Stephan Passalacqua deserves to enjoy the riches of this new phase of his life as a water and transportation consultant. We wish him well.

INTRODUCTION OF THE "OIL SPILL VICTIMS REDRESS ACT"

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 21, 2010

Mr. MARKEY of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, the Oil Spill Victims Redress Act that I am introducing today with the gentlewoman from Florida, Ms. CASTOR, would help protect those Gulf Coast residents who have seen their livelihoods destroyed by the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

This legislation would clarify that people who have suffered economic harm as a result of the BP spill can seek to pursue claims from all of the companies involved in the disaster in state court. The companies involved in the spill, including Halliburton and Cameron, have argued that the Oil Pollution Act preempts state law and, as a result, that all state law claims brought by the victims of the spill should be dismissed or removed to federal court. Some of these companies, such as Halliburton and Cameron, have even argued that they should be exempt from all suits because they are not responsible parties as defined under the OPA.

To be clear, the underlying statute, the Oil Pollution Act, already clearly provides for claims brought in state court and was not intended to preempt state law. The Act clearly states that "nothing in this Act . . . shall affect, or be construed or interpreted to affect or modify in any way the obligations or liabilities of any person under . . . State law, including common law."

However, in light of the legal arguments proffered by the companies involved in this disaster, the legislation that we are introducing today would further clarify the ability of people to seek compensation in state court. We must ensure that we do not forget about the people of the Gulf who have had their lives destroyed by this disaster. We must ensure that all of the companies responsible for the worst oil spill in our nation's history are held accountable. And we must ensure that everyone who has suffered economic damages as a result of the BP oil spill is made whole.

HAZEL HARTBARGAR

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 21, 2010

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and applaud Hazel Hartbargar for her outstanding service to our community.

As the Director of the Arvada Economic Development Association, Hazel Hartbargar is an advocate for all business in the community and has been recognized regionally and nationally for her work. She has been called the "heart and soul" of ADEA. Her ability to help people work together and the compassion she shows is exceptional.

Hazel has been instrumental in implementing many community programs including PropertyLink which is a website local commercial business can use to search for land, as well as retail and industrial space within the city. She also helped to implement JobLink which enables businesses within the city to post open positions.

When Hazel received the Pioneer Award, she was described as a true modern day pioneer; a visionary who ventures into the unknown, creating new opportunities for herself and others and encouraging others to explore new areas of thought.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Hazel Hartbargar for her well deserved recognition by the West Chamber serving Jefferson County. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future accomplishments.

HONORING PAUL ZALESKI

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 21, 2010

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of my colleagues a tribute to Mr. Paul Zaleski who passed from this life on November 24 at the age of 95. This tribute was written by noted author and historian, Allen Paul, whose books include "Katyn: Stalin's Massacre and the Triumph of Truth." As Mr. Paul points out, Mr. Zaleski epitomized the courage of his generation of extraordinary Poles who came to the U.S. after the terror and broken dreams unleashed by World War II. I, too, had the privilege of meeting him on May 5 of this year at a 70th anniversary observance of the Katyn Forest Massacre, at the Library of Congress. Paul Zaleski may well have been the last link here in the U.S. to the Polish Government in Exile. May his family and friends be comforted in the knowledge he lived to see the fall of the Berlin Wall, Solidarity whose 30th anniversary we commemorate this year, and Poland admitted to NATO.

A TRIBUTE TO PAUL ZALESKI

Paul Zaleski led the most interesting life of anyone I have ever known. Such a quiet unassuming man, imbued with old world grace and dignity, never bitter despite the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune—who could have guessed his escape in a hail of bullets, how he and others returned that fire by pinging the American conscience, how we eventually came to see that Poland, the land he loved and lost, must be reborn independent and free. He laid no claim to great deeds, but the memorable title of Dean Acheson's autobiography—"Present at the Creation"—almost perfectly fits his life.

Paul and I were close friends for twenty years. His death on November 24 leaves a notable void: a direct link is lost—perhaps the last—to the Poles' ill-fated Government in Exile and to the heroic gamble after the end of the war to save Poland from Stalin. Paul was longtime secretary to Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, prime minister of the Government in Exile in London. In 1945 Mikolajczyk decided to go back to Poland to join a communist-controlled coalition government and Paul went with him. Both men were gambling with their lives but took the chance to achieve two main objectives: first, to keep the communists from stealing the "free and unfettered" elections promised at Yalta; and

second, to prevent Stalin from liquidating and/or deporting nearly 400,000 partisans who were still in the forests of Poland waiting to fight. The elections were stolen through blatant fraud; but aim two was achieved: Mikolajczyk "bought" safe passage for the partisans and averted a bloodbath.

Along the way thugs from the infamous UB (security service) made two attempts on Paul's life; and soon it became clear that Mikolajczyk, himself, would be tried as a traitor or liquidated. Both men escaped in 1947 and returned to the west where they launched a high-profile campaign to warn the west about the fate of Poland. Archbishop Francis Spellman arranged for rooms at the Waldorf Astoria where Mikolajczyk wrote his bestseller—"The Rape of Poland." The famous sports writer, Bob Considine, helped as did Paul. The book and the heavy speaking schedule Mikolajczyk kept up were influential in getting Congress to investigate the Katyn Forest Massacre in 1951-52. That probe established a record and body of evidence that stands even today. It concluded that the Russians had brutally murdered thousands of Polish officers in the spring of 1940.

Paul's symbiotic relationship with Mikolajczyk heavily influenced his life. Not long before the war Paul earned a law degree from Jan Kazimierz University in Lwow and became an organizer with the Peasant Party (Stronnictwo Ludowe) then headed by Mikolajczyk. After his escape from Poland, Paul went to France where Mikolajczyk was serving in the leadership of the Government in Exile. He sent Paul as an emissary to Bucharest and later to Istanbul. When the Germans invaded Russia in 1941, the Poles and Russians reestablished diplomatic relations; and Paul was sent to help open the new embassy in Kuybyshev. Two years later the relationship fell apart over the Katyn crisis and Paul helped get the embassy staff out of the U.S.S.R. They took the southern route which meant the convoy had to cross "The Roof of the World"—the Pamir Mountains—to get to Persia. Paul then crossed the Middle East and rejoined Mikolajczyk where the Government in Exile moved after Dunkirk. He was at Mikolajczyk's side—often when he met Churchill and other world leaders—and remained there until Mikolajczyk died in 1966.

His exploits notwithstanding, Paul still had to earn a living after immigrating to the United States. His Polish law degree gave him no standing here, so he went to law school for the second time at George Washington University and later became an attorney with the U.S. Maritime Commission. After he retired he practiced law on his own specializing in estate work. He was executor for many members of the expatriate community and seldom if ever charged for his services.

I saw in Paul many qualities that epitomized the Poles who got stranded in the west when Stalin swallowed their country whole. They found the courage to rebuild shattered lives, became intensely proud and loyal Americans and remained unwavering in their commitment to Polish freedom and independence. I talked to Paul often and we spoke only a few days before he died. I know it gave him great satisfaction—much comfort in fact—that the torch was passed, that the ideals of his generation survived the long dark years of communism, that they are strongly embraced today by a new generation of leaders who have guided Poland to a remarkable position in which it has one of the strongest economies and most stable democracies in all of Europe.

From their near-miraculous escape in 1947 to their messianic campaign to win the minds and hearts of Americans, Paul and his